

# Cass County Republican.

VOLUME III.

DOWAGIAC, CASS COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 1861.

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## The Republican.

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By W. H. CAMPBELL.

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## Message of Gov. Blair.

Delivered in Joint Legislative Session, at  
Lansing, Jan. 3, 1861.

INTRODUCTORY.

After a period of two years, during  
which the Legislative body has not as-  
sembled, we meet, charged with the  
duty of re-examining the laws and in-  
stitutions of the State; to correct, so  
far as we may, the errors of the past  
in the light of experience, and to pro-  
vide wisely, if we can, the exigencies  
of the future. No higher trust than  
this, can be reposed in a citizen. As  
the Representatives of the people, dili-  
gence and patriotism will become us.  
An earnest regard for their rights, in-  
terests and liberties, is a solemn obli-  
gation upon us.

I have the highest satisfaction, in be-  
ing able to congratulate you upon the  
general good order and prosperity of  
the State. The past year has been one  
of great fruitfulness. Beautiful har-  
vests have put famine and distress far  
away from our doors. No pestilence  
has afflicted the people of the State;  
but general good health has prevailed  
among them. The laws have been cheer-  
fully obeyed by the mass of the peo-  
ple, and their infraction, by the  
criminal, has been promptly punished  
by a wise and patriotic Judiciary. The  
State has advanced rapidly in wealth  
and population. The census of 1860,  
taken under the laws of the United  
States, shows the population of the  
State to be, in round number, seven  
hundred and fifty thousand.

Our soils are rich, and of great vari-  
ety, producing in abundance all the  
crops which belong to the latitude.  
The State possesses immense forests of  
valuable timber which are already a  
source of great and increasing wealth.  
In minerals, Michigan is without a rival.  
Her mines of copper and iron are of  
the very finest quality; and, thus far,  
seem to be measureless in extent. Coal,  
also, of good quality, is now proved to  
be abundant, while the explorations for  
saline waters in the Valleys of the Sag-  
inaw and Grand Rivers have been suc-  
cessful. Possessing a great area of  
territory, surrounded on three  
sides by the greatest chain of lakes on  
the Continent, furnishing a cheap and  
easy outlet to the ocean, and the mar-  
kets of the world, Michigan has all the  
elements of an empire within herself.  
We have reason to be thankful to that  
"good Providence" which is rapidly  
guiding us in the course of a great, free  
and happy commonwealth.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.

The people of the State have adopted,  
with great unanimity, the amendment  
to the Constitution proposed by the  
last Legislature, in respect to the ses-  
sions of your body. By that amend-  
ment the limitation to the length of  
your session is substantially swept  
away. Experience, which is the true  
test of all institutions, has proved that  
biennial sessions of forty days are not  
always, if ever, sufficient to enable the  
Legislature to accomplish its work  
promptly. Under that system, a some-  
what careless haste took the place of  
that calm deliberation which is abso-  
lutely essential to the enactment of  
wise laws. The only limitation which  
remains, is the prohibition to introduce  
any "new bill into either House, after  
the first fifty days of the session shall  
have expired." And though this might  
be easily evaded, I have no doubt you  
will observe it in good faith, as a bind-  
ing obligation upon you. You will also  
remember that the original limitation  
to forty days was enacted in accom-  
dance with the almost universal de-  
mand of the people at the time, and to  
correct what was deemed a great abuse.  
No future occasion, I trust, will occur  
to renew, among the people, a desire to  
restore the limitation.

NEW APPOINTMENT.

It becomes your duty, under Section  
4, Article 4, of the Constitution, "to  
re-arrange the Senate Districts, and ap-  
portion anew the Representatives  
among the counties and districts, ac-  
cording to the number of white in-  
habitants, and civilized persons of Indian  
descent not members of any tribe."

It will also be your duty to divide the  
State into six Congressional districts,  
pursuant to a ratio of population fixed  
by the act of Congress on that subject.  
In the construction of these districts,  
it will be obvious just and wise to con-  
sider the fact, that the newer regions  
of the State will increase in population  
much more rapidly than the older; and  
the great inequalities likely to occur in  
the future, before another division is  
made, may be somewhat modified by  
the construction of districts with refer-  
ence to their future increase. The  
districts ought to be, in their several  
parts, and of harmonious interests.  
The Senatorial districts are limited in  
number by the Constitution, to thirty-  
two, and the House of Representatives  
must consist of "not less than sixty-  
four, nor more than one hundred mem-  
bers."

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS.

"The Act to further preserve the  
purity of elections, and guard against  
abuses of the elective franchise, by a  
registration of electors," passed by the  
last Legislature, has been subjected to  
the test of experience, and found very  
conducive to the object in view. The  
elections under it have been peaceful  
and orderly in a very unusual degree.  
Illegal voting is rendered well nigh im-  
possible; and the confidence of the  
people in the fairness of elections has  
been greatly increased. The incon-  
veniences of registration, which were  
much feared at the time of the passage  
of the law, have been found almost  
wholly imaginary, and I trust the act

may now be regarded as a permanent  
regulation of the State. In one or two  
particulars, perhaps, the law might be  
rendered more convenient by amend-  
ment. There seems no very good reason  
why the elector should be required to  
register his "Christian or baptismal  
name" in full. Some mistakes have  
occurred in this respect, by which elec-  
tors have been rejected at the polls, and  
I recommend you to consider whether  
the ends of the law might not be as  
well attained by allowing the elector to  
register his name as he usually writes it.  
I also recommend you to consider  
whether, in pursuance of the purpose  
further to preserve the purity of elec-  
tions, it would be well to enact a law  
for the suppression of the baleful prac-  
tice of betting upon elections. It  
seems to me that the highest right and  
duty of a freeman is not a proper sub-  
ject for gambling.

STATE FINANCES.

The financial condition of the State  
will necessarily occupy your earnest  
and careful consideration. The credit  
and honor of the State must be pre-  
served; and this can be done only by  
prompt payment of its debts, and full  
performance of all its obligations.  
Prudence and economy are the first  
duties of every government, as rashly in-  
curring debt is the sure road to bank-  
ruptcy. We should at once adopt a  
permanent policy, looking to the reduc-  
tion and final payment of the entire  
State debt. The Constitution very  
wisely as I think, adopted such a policy,  
and required the Legislature to carry it  
into effect as early as 1852. By article  
14, section 1, the specific State taxes  
(except those from the mining com-  
panies of the Upper Peninsula) are ap-  
plied to the payment of the interest  
upon the Primary School, University  
and other educational funds, and the  
interest and principal of the State debt,  
until the extinguishment of the State  
debt other than the amounts due to  
educational funds, and after that, such  
specific taxes are added to and consti-  
tute a part of the Primary School in-  
terest fund. The Legislature were also  
required "to provide for an annual tax,  
sufficient with the other resources, to  
pay the estimated expenses of the  
State Government, the interest of the  
State debt, and such deficiency as may  
occur in the resources." Section 2 of  
the same article, required the Legisla-  
ture to provide by law, a sinking fund  
of at least twenty thousand dollars a  
year, and an annual increase of at least  
five per cent., to be applied solely to  
the extinguishment of the principal of  
the State debt, other than the amount  
due to educational funds.

Unfortunately for the best interests of  
the State, the Legislature immediately  
following the adoption of the constitu-  
tion, disregarded these plain require-  
ments of the instrument they had sworn  
to support, and subsequent Legislatures  
have followed that bad precedent.  
The sinking fund has never been cre-  
ated and the annual tax has rarely if  
ever been sufficient.

The State debt, funded and fundable,  
not due Dec. 1, 1849, was \$2,071,962.  
This debt, Nov. 30, 1854, was \$2,-  
631,545.70. The funded and fundable  
debt is now \$2,288,842.79. But this is  
not by any means the entire debt of  
the State. We have been rapidly mak-  
ing another, likely soon to rival this in  
amount unless our policy is changed.  
The debt of the educational funds was,  
in the year 1849, Dec. 1st, \$276,442.44.  
In 1854, Nov. 30, \$681,699.73. The  
debt to the educational funds is now as  
follows:

Primary School	\$183,854.70
University	235,207.17
Normal School	44,587.86
Total	1,163,649.73

The yearly interest upon the funded  
and fundable debt is \$141,000. Upon  
the debt to the educational funds, \$83,-  
580.73.

The debt to the educational funds ac-  
cumulates yearly, to an amount equal  
to the whole amount of payments of  
principal monies for the purchase of  
lands which are founded on the funds.  
In other words, the State borrows the  
money as fast as received, and stands  
debtor to the funds on its books, for the  
amount. I think it is time that this  
practice should cease, and therefore re-  
commend you to the passage of an act,  
requiring the re-investment of the prin-  
cipal of the educational funds, when-  
ever any considerable amount of such  
principal monies shall be in the Treas-  
ury. Such investment might very well  
be made in the bonds of the State, or  
if they could not conveniently be pur-  
chased, other safe securities might be  
founded. In order to be prepared for  
this reduction of the annual resources,  
it will be necessary to fix a future day  
for its commencement. I also recom-  
mend you to provide for the sinking  
fund, in accordance with the require-  
ments of the Constitution, to commence  
as soon as practicable. Schedule I, in  
the report of the Auditor-General, con-  
tains a calculation upon the basis of  
forty thousand dollars a year, with five  
per cent. annual increase, which would at  
five per cent. compound interest, pay the  
entire debt in twenty years. It is not  
so material that the yearly amount  
should be so large, as that the fund  
should be in process of steady increase,  
making it certain that the entire debt  
will certainly be paid at no very distant  
day. Perhaps the amount fixed by the  
Constitution (\$20,000) with an annual  
increase of five per cent., would be suf-  
ficient. I recommend also, that you  
provide for a permanent annual tax of  
sufficient amount to pay the entire ex-  
penses of the State government, over  
and above the resources, and to create  
the sinking fund, without any resort to  
borrowing, either from the educational

funds, or from any other quarter. The  
ultimate resources of the State will be  
abundantly sufficient to pay all its nec-  
essary expenses, and meet all its obli-  
gations promptly without borrowing,  
and without being at all burdensome  
to the people.

You will observe in the report of the  
Auditor-General, estimates of the ex-  
penses and revenues for the ensuing  
year, by which it appears that the re-  
venues are likely to fall considerably  
short of the expenses. This deficit  
seems to have occurred from a variety  
of causes, but chiefly from the extra-  
ordinarily large appropriations made  
by the last Legislature, in aid of the  
Asylums and other State Institutions.

To relieve the finances from this em-  
barrassment the Auditor-General re-  
commends the issue of stocks to meet  
the interest on our outstanding indebt-  
edness, falling due in July, 1861, and  
January, 1862, and some other State in-  
debtedness, amounting in all to about  
one hundred and fifty thousand dollars,  
payable at the pleasure of the State  
any time after two years; and to levy  
a State tax to meet the same. If no  
other resource can be found, then prob-  
ably this must be done, if the Legisla-  
ture has power to do it; but I feel  
exceedingly averse to adding anything  
more to the debt of the State.

The contingent loan is very likely  
soon to become a permanent debt.  
The State is also largely in debt to  
the counties, and immediate provision  
should be made for its payment. These  
amounts are principally due to the new  
counties, and the natural and necessary  
hardships and embarrassments attend-  
ing new settlements, are largely in-  
creased by their inability to realize the  
amounts due them from the State. It  
will be a shame to us if we allow this  
to continue.

In view of the present condition of  
the finances, I earnestly recommend  
you to encourage no new schemes; to  
undertake no considerable additions to  
the public institutions of the State, and  
confine your appropriations to the ac-  
tual necessities of the public service.  
It is exceedingly manifest that for some  
years past the State has been incurring  
burdens inconveniently heavy. We  
have been building too much and too  
fast for the revenues provided. It has  
also been a source of great embarrass-  
ment heretofore, that appropriations  
have been made out of the general  
fund, to be drawn immediately, while  
the taxes levied to meet them could not  
be collected in less than a year.

The treasury is thus called upon to  
advance the money a long period before  
it can be reimbursed. This is evidently  
a bad practice, and should be avoided  
in future; at least until the treasury is  
sufficiently replenished to meet such a  
call.

A very large part of the bonded debt  
of the State will fall due in January,  
1863. You will see the necessity of  
providing for the issue of these bonds.  
Fortunately, the credit of the State is  
extremely good, and deservedly so.  
The resources are very large and yearly  
increasing, while the debt is moderate  
in amount. State taxation has been  
very light, and there will be no occasion  
to make it at all oppressive for the future.

DEFALCATION OF THE STATE TREASURER.

I have not been able to see the report  
of the late State Treasurer, if indeed  
that officer has made any report. He  
stands charged in the report of the  
Board of State Auditors, whose duty  
it was annually to settle with him, and  
finally adjust all claims between him  
and the State, with gross violations of  
law, and mal-administration of his office.  
There is reason to believe that the  
Treasurer is a defaulter to the State in  
a considerable amount. For all the  
facts attending the defalcation I must  
refer you to the message of my prede-  
cessor. I earnestly recommend you to  
make a thorough and searching inves-  
tigation into the condition and previous  
conduct of the Treasury department; and  
if any further legislation is neces-  
sary for the security of the public  
monies, to supply the same; to direct  
the Attorney General immediately to  
prosecute the official bond of the late  
Treasurer, to which the State looks  
primarily for its security, and to use all  
legal means within the power of the  
State to recover the monies which have  
been illegally withheld from the Treas-  
ury. There ought to be no temporizing  
with a defaulter public officer, but the  
utmost rigor of the law ought to be  
applied to him. Officers in high places  
of public trust who willfully miscon-  
duct themselves to the injury of the people,  
are criminals of the highest grade.  
They destroy public confidence, weaken  
the faith of men in the government and  
in each other, and undermine the very  
foundations of the public virtue.

STATE TAXATION.

I recommend to your consideration  
the suggestions of the Auditor-General  
for the improvement of the laws pro-  
viding for the assessment and collection  
of taxes. Sections eighty-nine (89)  
and one hundred and one (101) of the  
act number thirty-two (32) of the laws  
of 1858, have been found useless and  
redundant, and I think ought to be re-  
pealed. A portion of them has already  
been held by the Supreme Court to be  
without constitutional authority. Al-  
lowing a more liberal time for redemp-  
tion, at very heavy interest, would no  
doubt have a much greater tendency  
to induce payment of taxes—which is  
the prime object—than the law as it  
now stands.

Some further legislation seems neces-  
sary to enable the officers of the State  
to collect the specific taxes against cor-  
porations, I refer you to the recommen-  
dations of the Auditor General on this  
subject, in which I fully concur.

THE BANKING LAW.

The amendment of the Constitution,  
proposed by the last Legislature, con-  
cerning banking corporations, has been  
adopted by the people and is now part  
of the fundamental law. It is as fol-  
lows: "The officers and stockholders  
of every corporation for banking pur-  
poses, issuing bank notes or paper  
credits, to circulate as money, shall be  
individually liable for all debts con-  
tracted during the term of their being  
officers, or stockholders of such cor-  
poration or association equally and  
ratably to the extent of their respective  
shares of stock in any such corporation  
or association." This amendment has  
removed the only insurmountable ob-  
jection to the Act of 1857, to authorize  
the business of banking. It is believed  
that there is nothing now to prevent  
the making of a safe and beneficial law  
on this subject. Bank paper has be-  
come so important a part of the cur-  
rency of the country, that commercial  
transactions can, with difficulty, be  
performed without it. It seems much  
better to supply ourselves with this  
currency, by laws of our own, than to  
borrow from abroad that which is not  
entirely beyond our control, but of  
which we have necessarily a very im-  
perfect knowledge. The great prob-  
lem seems to be, to make the bill always  
convertible into actual cash at the will  
of the holder, with the least possible  
delay. For this purpose there can be  
no substitute for the payment of specie  
by the bank, on demand. If any delay  
is allowed, the bill possesses none of  
the qualities of money. For the pur-  
pose of securing the bill holder against  
any default of the bank, the system of  
the deposit of State Stocks seems every  
way the safest and best. I recommend  
the whole act in question, to your most  
careful and deliberate review. The  
previous law had not the confidence of  
capitalists, and has been substantially  
a dead letter.

THE ASYLUMS.

The Asylum for the deaf dumb, and  
blind, at the city of Flint, seems to be  
realizing the benevolent objects had in  
view in its establishment. The whole  
number of pupils during the past year  
has been one hundred and twenty-  
three; though only ninety have been  
instructed at any one time. A portion  
of the buildings are still incomplete,  
and the Board of Trustees urge upon  
the Legislature, an early appropriation  
of a sum sufficient, not only for ordi-  
nary and educational wants of the pub-  
lic, but also to complete and furnish all  
the buildings now in progress of erec-  
tion. What amount will be sufficient  
for all these objects, the Board has not  
informed us. I regret exceedingly that  
the State finances are in such a condi-  
tion that I cannot recommend you to  
make any appropriation at present, for  
building and furnishing purposes; but  
only sufficient for the ordinary expenses  
of carrying on the Institution for the  
ensuing two years. The amount of  
appropriations to this Asylum since  
1853, have been \$193,000.

Under the existing statutes, the pup-  
ils of this Institution are supported  
entirely by the State, except in the  
matter of clothing. I am unable to  
discover any reason why the pupils of  
this Asylum and their relatives, guard-  
ians, the city, town or county, that  
would be liable for their support when  
out of it, should not be liable for the  
maintenance for such pupils when in  
the Asylum, in the same manner as is  
provided in the case of insane persons,  
in section 13, in act 164 of the laws of  
1859. I therefore recommend the pas-  
sage of a similar act, in relation to  
the pupils in this Asylum.

The Asylum for the Insane at Kala-  
mazoo is now fully organized, and has  
comfortable accommodations for one  
hundred and eleven patients. It is the  
duty as it will no doubt be the pleas-  
ure of the Legislature, to further as far  
as practicable the benevolent purposes  
of this institution. But, even the  
claims of benevolence must be regulated  
by sound policy, and the ability of  
the State to pay. It is idle to talk of  
appropriating the money which we do  
not possess. This Institution was  
commenced upon a very extensive, and  
I have no doubt a very good plan. Its  
cost was estimated at \$200,000. The  
Trustees, however, have since consid-  
erably extended the plan, and now es-  
timate the entire cost at \$275,600.  
They now ask a further appropriation  
of one hundred thousand dollars. As  
in the case of other public institutions,  
my duty requires me to say, that no  
such appropriation can reasonably be  
made. Neither do I think that any  
very serious evils will flow, from allow-  
ing the Asylum to wait for the com-  
pletion of the buildings, until the State  
can be extricated from its present em-  
barrassments. The State has been,  
and will continue to be liberal towards  
it. The appropriations made by law  
to the Insane Asylums since 1853, have  
been \$237,000.

REFORM SCHOOL.

The State Reform School is in very  
successful operation. An additional  
wing has been erected during the past  
year, at a cost of a little over eighteen  
thousand dollars. The present Super-  
intendent, Rev. D. B. Nichols, has in-  
troduced into the School the new and  
milder system of discipline, with the  
happiest results. The Superintendent  
and the Board of Control recommend  
that the law in relation to the school be  
as amended as to prevent the sending  
of female offenders there, in which I  
fully concur. There are no proper ac-  
commodations for them, and cannot be  
without additional buildings. The  
Board have incurred a small debt of  
\$1,494.28, by making repairs, in conse-

quence of injuries to the workshops by  
fire, which I recommend you to provide  
for the payment of.

There were confined in the School,  
on the 16th of November last, one hun-  
dred and thirty-seven persons. The  
ordinary expenses of the School for the  
past year have been \$16,445.60; and  
the whole amount appropriated by law  
for building, since and including 1853,  
when the first appropriation was made  
is \$52,000.

THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

The Agricultural College has been a  
source of great anxiety to the State  
government, and a serious burden to  
the Treasury, ever since the commence-  
ment of its construction in 1857. The  
Salt Spring Lands, or their proceeds,  
had been previously devoted to its es-  
tablishment, and in that year an appor-  
portion was made from the general  
fund, of \$40,000, and in 1859, a further  
appropriation was made of \$37,500, in  
all \$77,500. It was founded, as de-  
clared by the law, to "furnish instruc-  
tion in agriculture, and the natural sci-  
ences connected therewith," and was  
put under the control of the Board of  
Education. It has never seemed to be  
entirely free from embarrassments, in  
one way or another. Perhaps we  
ought not to be surprised at this. It is  
an experiment, to a great extent, and  
safe precedents for its conduct are want-  
ing.

It ought to be confined strictly to  
the object of its organization, and must  
not be a rival to the State University in  
any respect; but it should teach far  
more thoroughly and extensively the  
sciences that relate to agriculture than  
any ordinary College. Men who have  
given their lives to these sciences ought  
to be employed in it. In accordance  
with the opinion of the Board of Ed-  
ucation, I recommend you to commit  
the future care of this College to a  
State Board of Agriculture, five in num-  
ber, to be appointed as may seem to  
your judgment best. The expenses for  
the year 1860 have been \$13,135.75.

The Board ask an appropriation of  
\$25,000—\$15,000 to pay salaries for  
two years, and the remainder for build-  
ings, tools and the like. Most of it  
seems indispensable if the institution is  
to go on, and I therefore recommend  
that the appropriation be made, of as  
much of it as you think essential.

STATE PRISON.

I refer you to the reports of the  
Board of Inspectors and Agent for  
particulars concerning the condition  
and finances of the State Prison, at  
Jackson. It will give you pleasure to  
learn that, for the past year, that in-  
stitution has shown its ability to support  
itself; and there seems no reason to  
doubt that it will continue to do so in  
the future. The expenses for the past  
year have been \$47,684.50; the earn-  
ings for the same time \$51,338.26—  
showing a balance of earnings over ex-  
penses of \$3,653.76. The number of  
convicts now in the Prison is 621,  
being an increase over last year of 86.  
How long this ratio of increase will  
continue it is impossible to say, but it  
is greatly to be hoped that we have  
reached nearly the culminating point.

The rapid increase in the number of  
convicts since 1853, has compelled the  
State to be constantly increasing the  
capacity of the Prison, to contain and  
work them. The Inspectors state that  
the present capacity of the prison, will  
give them but about sixty-two vacant  
cells, as a provision for future in-  
crease of convicts, and there is a lack